

All-Star Futures Game

Saturday, July 13, 2024

Arlington, Texas, USA

Globe Life Field

Adrian Beltré

Michael Young

Futures Game Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We're getting started with Futures managers, AL manager, Adrian Beltré; NL manager, Michael Young.

Q. Adrian, you've got so much going on this week with the All-Star Game and, of course, the Hall of Fame. What's it like with your son being eligible for the draft, and will you spend the next few days with him?

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: It's going to be fun. I think that the last couple weeks have been a little crazy. We decided to come here and be part of this event and be part of the draft probably too. My son has a possibility. We'll see what he decides to do. But it's been fun so I'm looking forward to it.

Q. Him growing up, was it tough because everybody knows whose dad it was? Was it more pressure on him?

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: That's a question for him, I think. I think he tries to be on the back side, to be there. But knowing, let him do his thing. Letting him struggle his own thing. We can try to fix some stuff. But I always try to keep give him some space.

For the most part, he really handled it well.

Q. Michael, I know you guys are having a lot of fun with all these guys, all your old teammates around. When the first pitch is thrown, you guys have always been competitive. Do you think it's going to be competitive, you're going to feel the adrenaline and the juices flow?

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: Hold on. He's got to answer his phone call first.

MICHAEL YOUNG: What's Nevada, Texas? Is that a city?

Q. It's just north of here.

MICHAEL YOUNG: Sorry.

Q. You didn't even know Waxahachie one time.

MICHAEL YOUNG: What is that? Just kidding.

I think, for one, I want to make sure the players have a great experience. But I think A.B. and I are both going to try -- he told me he's 2-0, intends to go 3-0.

I don't think either one of us will do this thing if, once the game started, we didn't want to win it.

To your point, it's great to see these guys. There's a lot of guys to give handshakes, hugs, see old teammates again and old friends again.

I think one of the best things we can do for these kids is be here to support them but to let them know when the game starts, you play to win. That's the whole goal.

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: Nice to see all those guys here. To see a couple guys I haven't seen in a while. It's fun being in the clubhouse and enjoying this.

For the part of being competitive, yeah, definitely. I just saw him spying on my lineup right now when we walked in. We know the game. We enjoy playing the game, and we know how fun it can be.

At the same time, we want to win. There's no doubt that we want to win. We want to compete, make sure the guys have fun, enjoy it. This is a privilege to be here. It's the best place in the Minor League, to have a great future to be in the Big Leagues soon, soon enough.

So, yes, we want to win. At the same time, we want those guys to enjoy the game and produce. It's a showcase for them. A showcase. People can see them, see what they do, and hopefully they can be in the Big Leagues soon.

Q. Adrian and Michael, working with these kids here, you were both known as leaders in the clubhouse here. How do you impart knowledge to these young kids about doing things the right way and being



accountable and being a leader because already people are looking at them to be the next stars for their teams.

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: For me, I learned a lot from this guy. When I got here to Texas, he was the first guy to greet me here. He was already here, and I learned a lot from Michael. He's a great guy to follow. And I always try to keep learning from guys, from different guys, how to lead and how to be part of a big group.

So for us, we talk about -- I think he talked about in the meeting earlier, the breakfast, first you need to understand there's people watching you, people looking at you. Not just what you do on the field. How you carry yourself around other people. The kind of person you are.

For those guys here, we're going to talk about that today. Not just to be a good player, but a good human being. You always want to create leaders, not only for the game; for life too.

MICHAEL YOUNG: I think to Adrian's point, not to return the compliment, but it's easy for this guy. The one thing I loved about him is that Adrian didn't just show up at 7:00 and punch in, punch out. There are certain teammates that you play with and you love to play with because they really play to win.

When I played against Adrian, I admired him a lot because, one, he played through injuries. He's a tough dude, played hard. Teammates loved him. It's easy as an opponent to really, really like and respect guys like that.

When I played with him, at 7:00, when the first pitch goes and the lights go on, he's not just here. He's here to win. And, like, especially when you have a good team and a guy like that walks in the door, immediately, before the first game is even played, we just got so much better. Obviously he's a great player. Just the way he approaches the game.

It's one day. So it's hard to make big connections, but if there's one thing that we can do to talk to these kids about, when you're playing, of course, you're having fun and it's all part of it. But play to win. Show up and play to win. Everybody's going to feed off of that.

Q. This is a question, mostly for Adrian, but certainly Michael might have an opinion as well. Adrian, the last few days, you've been doing so many things here in Arlington related to the All-Star Game, and then you're also prepping for the Hall of Fame. My question is, do you find yourself having to do all these things, talking to people? Do you find yourself more relaxed than

when you were a player, when you had to produce on the field and talk to people, whether it was reporters or in a setting like this? Do you find yourself more relaxed now doing these things?

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: Well, I can't necessarily say I'm relaxed the last couple weeks, but definitely the whole thing about coming here and doing this, yes, relaxed. You don't have the stress of producing and being part of a team that you want to help any way you can.

Yeah, it's more relaxed because more from the outside looking in. The last couple weeks has been kind of crazy, busy, and we're coming up too. So I'm trying to enjoy the whole thing. I'm enjoying this right now. The only part that I'm not enjoying, thinking about the speech I have to get up there and throw some curveballs. That's not going to be good, by the way.

But it's just a great time. It's a great time for me, not only because of me and I'll be able to see great friends and great guys that I look up to, but having my son here and enjoying all the stuff because it's a plus for me. I always wanted to be able to be in places that he can enjoy too because he loved baseball more than me, actually.

So to be able to be around this clubhouse with these guys and bring him back to this Futures Game for me is a plus.

Q. Adrian, what do you know about Sebastian Walcott? And how difficult is it for an 18-year-old to be a professional and do the things that you guys are talking about, knowing that people are watching?

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: Well, I can't even say that I can relate because I think everybody knows who he is. But as a player, you have to just do your thing. It's so much going on with that guy. I'm a fan. But I can't speak for him. I haven't had a conversation with him yet.

But he has a good problem. It's a good problem to have, being in his position. So I can't say more about that.

Q. Adrian, I don't know if you've noticed or seen the videos of Elly De La Cruz and the pride he has in learning English, even interviewing teammates. When you see the young kids here, the Latinos, Dominicans, Puerto Ricans, the importance of learning English, of being articulate, can you tell me a little bit about your growth in the Dodgers Academy from not speak English to learning English and the importance for all these kids to be able to speak that second language?

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: Yeah, definitely. It's funny, because

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

we were just talking about that with my son yesterday, that when I first saw, I think it was a month ago, two months ago -- Spring Training, when he first got back -- when was it? Four months ago. Sorry. Time just goes by.

MICHAEL YOUNG: Retired life.

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: Yeah, I know. And I saw his interview when he was -- he said that he wanted to do interviews in English. He didn't speak English whatsoever last year. Me as a Dominican fellow, my third language is English. My first language is love.

(Laughter.)

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: So for me, I was a fan. I became even more a fan because I understand, me growing up in the Dominican, not speaking one word of English, I'm still learning. I can't speak English to save my life. I know what it takes and I know how easy it can be when you actually can express what you want.

When you're in an environment where you don't know what people are saying about you, you can't express yourself, it's difficult. You can't enjoy what you do. For a guy like him to force himself to learn the language, which is probably going to be more than half of the year, is great to see.

A lot of the Latino guys should emphasize on being able to learn the language and communicate because, you know, they expect to be here for a long time. So it's great to see.

Q. Michael, when Adrian came and you became teammates, when did it hit you and how quickly did you think I might be playing with a future Hall of Famer here? I know you touched on it, but what jumped out at you about him?

MICHAEL YOUNG: Yeah. Playing against him when he was in Seattle, it's weird. I don't know how he is, but I never focus on stats. You know who's good. You watch Adrian take ground balls. Okay. He's really good at this. Watch him hit two homers in the game. Okay, he's got a lot of power.

You play with somebody, and you gain a whole 'nother level of expect for the way they do it. He's 0-for-3 but doesn't give the fourth one away. Boom, base hit into right field. He gets momentum into the next day. He's showing up, doesn't give anything away, never takes a play off on defense.

All those small things, you start looking at that, and you're like, wow, this guy's a really, really special player.

Again, it didn't take long, once we were teammates, for me to see that. When you combine that with the fact he was a Big League starter when he was 11 years old, that's a lot of numbers that stack up. You look at what he's able to do. Like, damn, look at his numbers right now. Sure enough, in his 30s, he crushes the league. Next thing you know, he's a slam dunk first ballot guy.

So, again, huge honor to play with him for sure.

Q. So, Adrian, we've been talking about this speech for months. How much of it is done?

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: It's done. Just got it done two days ago. So it's done, but just how to deliver, that's going to be the big part. I can't speak English, and once I get there, I'm going to get -- it's going to be a mess, but I'm going to get up there somehow.

Q. Just use your love language.

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: I should. Yeah, I might do that. Thank you.

Q. Let me ask you, did you prepare for this and learn about the Hall of Fame process? And gone through all this since you found the word that you were getting in, how much have you learned? Have you given yourself time to think about what you're going into and the names you're going to be associated with for the rest of your life?

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: To be honest, for a second couple times, I've thought about it. But I've been so concentrated.

So, yeah, you know, the whole process of Hall of Fame thing is I'm honored and I never thought about being in that group whatsoever. And I'm grateful. But it hasn't sunk in yet.

There's been a lot of things that I have to prepare for, getting ready for a lot of stuff, like I repeat again, like the whole speech thing doesn't let me enjoy the way I should. But I can't wait to be there, trying to enjoy it.

But I think once the speech is over, it's then when I'm going to have it maybe if I don't screw it up too bad. Then I'm going to realize where I'm at, the people who are next to me and what I have accomplished and the group that, somehow, I'm going to be associated with.

MICHAEL YOUNG: Can I double back? I don't mean to butt in here, but he's doing all this in a second languages. I mean, I can't imagine how difficult that is. Really, we tease

him all the time when he talks. But, I mean, this is not his -- third language, apparently, right?

But I can't imagine how difficult that is. To your point, talking about young players making a huge effort to speak English. You ask players here born in the States, and they can't go to Chipotle. Spanish to them is ordering extra guacamole at Chipotle. That's their Spanish for the day.

It's incredible what these guys do, put in massive efforts to, one, get to know the teammates in the clubhouse, live everyday life in a different society.

I give, you know, Adrian just -- talking about what he did as a player. But to be able to write a Hall of Fame speech and try to cover his whole life, people who have meant something to him, and doing it in English really is an incredible thing. Really is.

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: Thank you.

Q. Adrian, one of the things that kind of stood out about you as a player was there was uniqueness to the way that you played, in addition to the production, whether it was the shuffling of the feet after a take or sometimes the unchecked swing. How aware were you of some of the unique traits that you demonstrated on the field that ended up being pretty entertaining to watch? Who entertains you when you watch them playing baseball right now?

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: Well, thank you for calling it unique. I think it was more weird, stuff that I used to do.

But it wasn't by design. It just is ways that I was always trying to figure out how to be better. I did things just to try to make myself better.

The shuffle of the feet, I don't know. I didn't like it. I don't know how it came out. When I was aggressive and didn't swing, my feet, I couldn't help it. All the other things I did, it was just stupid. Crazy things I used to do, you know.

But part of me was just trying to have fun, enjoy the game. And I think that was one of the main reasons why I played for so long and why I got to actually enjoy what I did, understanding there was not a job. It was just a game that we get paid to play. We have so much passion. I love the game. Why not enjoy it?

I was trying just to do whatever I could to just be happy and enjoy the game. Some people like some stuff, some people didn't like it, but I was just being myself. Being myself. What I see in a lot of guys doing different things now, I watch Soto, which there's some similar. And other

guys do crazy stuff. Some guys do a little too much. But everyone has their own different things to do.

But you know what? I didn't try to do it for a laugh or to make people, you know, make fun of other people. I just did it because it came out. It came out of me, and I feel comfortable doing it.

There's a couple things that was infamous or whatever you call it, that pull. It would just happen because the guy told me, You get over there. Okay. Pull the thing with me. Not trying to be funny, but I was just trying to be myself and enjoy the game, and that's how it happened.

Q. Michael, if I can follow up, how much did you -- when did it occur to you, like, as a teammate of Adrian's, day to day, when did you start enjoying and picking up on some of the uniqueness of some of the elements that he was doing and how much did you appreciate that?

MICHAEL YOUNG: I remember the first time he did the feet thing, we were in Spring Training in Peoria. He had just signed with Seattle. I was playing short. Bottom of the 1st, and he takes a pitch and he starts stomping his feet. I was like, What the?

Again, the only thing I knew about Adrian is he had big years in L.A., coming off a really big year. Because he was in the other league, I didn't see him play on a day-to-day basis. That was the first time I'd seen that. I thought it was very weird too.

But in playing with Adrian, like he said, he's just being himself. It wasn't something that he kind of like set out to do. Just kind of came out. I remember one time I heard him give an answer, and I kind of related to it. I didn't do anything like that.

But he was talking about when we first came into the league, young players weren't supposed to do stuff like that. It was you get into the clubhouse, you shut up, be seen, don't be heard, that kind of thing.

Nowadays, young players are encouraged to be themselves. Adrian was talking, there was a point in his career where he's like, Okay, I'm going to be myself now. I think it probably coincided with his career hitting a whole 'nother gear too.

So, yeah, I had a front row seat for it. It was fun to see. Again, it was fun to see because it wasn't manufactured. It was just him being him. You always respect that from teammates when they're just being themselves.

Q. I know we're talking about all the weird stuff and there is a lot of it. And there are those indelible moments, like you talked about the pulling the on-deck circle and the schtick with Elvis and all that. But one of the more indelible moments for me in your career was the 3,000th hit and the celebration with your kids on the field. And I'm curious, like, where that image ranks in your head in terms of your career and just how significant it is for you to be able to celebrate this and have your kids being a big part of your career?

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: You're right. I think the 3,000th hit was number one in my career for different reasons. Because, number one, I never expected myself to be there. When I came to the Big Leagues, like Michael said, a great point, when you came to the Big Leagues, you were happy to be there. You sit in the corner. You didn't say nothing. They tell you to jump, you jump. That's how it was in our days.

I think nobody knew who I was for three years in the clubhouse because I just stood in my corner, did whatever I was asked because I was happy to be there.

But back then, I never expected to play so long. I never thought about being even in the conversation of 3,000 hits. It wasn't even in my mind. I didn't play for numbers, number one. And I didn't see myself as a player could get there.

I remember, I think it was 2001, I played with Rickey in L.A., and I was just amazed the numbers he had. I wasn't a numbers guy, but when they keep putting it on the scoreboard, you see the numbers he had, wow, this is unbelievable.

I never thought I would be in the conversation of being with Rickey in hits. Whatsoever. It was a far reach for me.

When I got to that number, it was incredible to think that I got there. But number two, it's just the way the Rangers did everything with my family, having the logo on right field and somehow they sneak it by me. I don't know how.

Having the family on the field and having them come in to hug me and say wonderful things they said to me that day, just seeing them coming in the field for me is number one. You know, I love baseball. That was my passion. But I'm a family man. I do it for my family. The fact that my wife was there, my kids, my parents is a moment I'll never forget. For that reason, it's definitely --

Q. What did they say to you when they came on?

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: Private things. It's graphic what they said.

MICHAEL YOUNG: It's graphic.

Q. Michael, Tuesday, somebody's going to win the MVP award at the All-Star Game. Can you go back to your experience of it and what that person is going to be feeling that night?

MICHAEL YOUNG: Yeah. That was a fun night.

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: That triple.

MICHAEL YOUNG: Yeah. It's a really, really cool moment. Like at the time when you're playing, you are -- it's an exhibition game, right? At the time, they had the rule with it deciding the World Series too, which was silly.

But you knew it kind of did mean something, but I remember, honestly, in that at-bat, I had a bit of a selfish moment. We had a guy on first, Paul Konerko, who got pinch run for and Troy Glaus was hitting, and I was on deck. There's two outs. Trevor Hoffman is on the mound. Troy hits one down the line, in the air. I knew it was going to be fair. It was if it was going to be a homer or ground-rule double.

If he gets a homer, Mariano comes in, game's over. It bounces over, I'm up with second and third. I'm like bounce, bounce, bounce, bounce, bounce.

If it were a regular season game, if it were a Spring Training game, we're not thinking that. I was like bounce, bounce. Bounces over, let's go. Again, you do have a different mindset for a game like that because now kind of everything was on the line and it made that at-bat a lot more fun, even before the result.

Then all of a sudden, you know, at the end of the game, you know, got a truck and gave it to my dad. It still sits in his driveway.

So it was a really, really cool moment. All-Star Games are great. They're really fun. No matter what, a lot of times leading up to the game you get asked do you want to go? I always said yeah, I would love to go. All-Star Games really are a good time. You get to hang out with guys you have a lot of respect for. If you're lucky to go with a bunch of teammates, it makes it even better.

We went one year. We were coming off going to the World Series. We had our staff, a bunch of players. It was a blast. Lots of good memories. That was a special one.

Q. Can you take us through and guide us about the love language that he had in the clubhouse with you



guys?

MICHAEL YOUNG: I didn't know he had one. I think that's probably very graphic too. I'm not going to say anything.

Q. Adrian, this weekend, is there any Hall of Famer that you really want to meet that you've never talked to before, you always wanted to say hello?

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: There's plenty of them. Plenty of them I would love to shake their hands and tell them I was a huge fan. I don't want to say who.

Q. I figure we can finish up with Spanish with Adrian. (Speaking Spanish.)

ADRIAN BELTRÉ: (Speaking Spanish.)

Q. Do we want Michael's response to that?

MICHAEL YOUNG: (Speaking Spanish.)

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